**APGOVPO Blogging Letter**

Dear Families:

From now to the end of our AP United States Government and Politics class will be taking part in a current events assignment designed to help them develop their political knowledge and explore their political interests by sharing their sources and thoughts with a real audience. Students will be using apgovpo.wordpress.com to post their assignments.

A Weblog, or blog as they are commonly called, is a special type of Web page that can be created and easily updated using a Web browser. Each new entry has its own date stamp. Each entry has a comments section where visitors to the blog may leave comments for the author.

**How it Works**

Each week I will teach a concept from one of our 6 units. Each of these lessons will highlight a specific topic form the United States federal government. These lesson will have all sorts of terms and actions that reflect what our federal government is doing or has done. Each last day of the week and each last day of the week the students will have to research two things. One is a current event new article on the weekly affairs from inside Washington. The students ahve been given several sources were they can find excellent resources. Mondays of each week students will then post an electrical media assignment. The electrical media is a reflection of a podcast or Sunday TV show they watched. Each of these assignments should make an attempt to connect to the content of the class from that week or weeks before. The emphasis is on the quality, not the quantity of what they write.

Students will have to complete these assignments on their own time. No extra computer sessions will be provided for them. Students must work from home or on their own time. All that is required is an Internet connection and a Web browser. Students are able to save their work as drafts before publishing it to their blog. Directions for working from home will be provided.

Having a real audience is one of the key components to this program. In addition to receiving comments from their classmates, students will receive comments from Mr. Pohlmann. Parents are also invited to visit the blogs and respond to the writing. Potentially, anyone on the Internet could respond to our blogs, however, it is not likely that the world at large will stumble across them.

**Security**

This blogging project is designed to minimize risk to your child. The only personally identifying information included in the blog will be their first name. There will be no mention of our school name or our location. Students are allowed to post their interests and opinions, but not their age, email address, photographs of themselves, or other sensitive information.

**Assessment**

The weekly blog assignments will be part of your child’s AP United States Government and Politics grade this term. As with other projects they have completed this year, students will receive a scoring rubric that explains the expectations for these assignments. The rubric will include a section for the comments they leave in other students’ blogs.

**Resources**

http://www.apgovpo.wordpress.com

**Permission**

Before your child may start posting to their blog, we are asking for you and your child to discuss and sign the following form. Please return the form to Mr. Pohlmann

***Blogging Terms and Conditions***

1. Students using blogs are expected to act safely by keeping personal information out of their posts. You agree to not post or give out your family name, password, user name, email address, home address, school name, city, country or other information that could help someone locate or contact you in person. You may share your interests, ideas and preferences.

2. Students using blogs agree not to share their user name or password with anyone besides their teachers and parents. You agree to never log in as another student.

3. Students using blogs are expected to treat blogspaces as classroom spaces. Speech that is inappropriate for class is not appropriate for your blog. While we encourage you to engage in debate and conversation with other bloggers, we also expect that you will conduct yourself in a manner reflective of a representative of this school.

4. Student blogs are to be a forum for student expression. However, they are first and foremost a tool for learning, and as such will sometimes be constrained by the various requirements and rules of classroom teachers. Students are welcome to post on any school-appropriate subject.

5. Students blogs are to be a vehicle for sharing student writing with real audiences. Most visitors to your blog who leave comments will leave respectful, helpful messages. If you receive a comment that makes you feel uncomfortable or is not respectful, tell your teacher right away. Do not respond to the comment.

6. Students using blogs take good care of the computers by not downloading or installing any software without permission, and not clicking on ads or competitions.

7. Students who do not abide by these terms and conditions may lose their opportunity to take part in this project.

I have read and understood these blogging terms and conditions. I agree to uphold them.

student’s signature:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

parent’s signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_